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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to assess the needs of adult learners at Gateway Community-Technical College (GCTC), in North Haven, Connecticut. An extended literature review resulted the choice of the three-part Adult Learner Needs Assessment Survey (ALNAS). In spring 1993, the ALNAS was administered to adult learners in classes at GCTC, resulting in 400 completed surveys representing 70% of the adult population at GCTC. Results for the first section of the ALNAS, which included inquiries into participants background, indicated that 65.3% of respondents were between the ages of 23 and 44, 77% of respondents were male, and 69.4% of respondents did not have a college degree. Results for the second section, w.ich investigated the educational plans and references of participants, indicated that 77% of respondents planned to continue their education, 52.3% of respondents cited improving their income as a major reason for continuing their education, while 54.4% reported that learning to solve personal and communication problems was not a reason. Results for the final section, focusing on the personal and educational needs of adult learners, indicated that the five most important issues were improving writing, test taking, study, and mathematical skills and learning about job opportunities, while the five least important issues were obtaining child care services, coping as a single parent, navigating the campus, dealing with divorce, and obtaining services for a physical disability. The survey instrument, transmittal letter, and results of ALNAS are appended. (MAB)

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ED 370 665

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ADULT LEARNERS' NEEDS AT GATEWAY COMMUNITY-TECHICAL COLLEGE

Politics, Law, and Economics of Higher Education

Wilson Luna

Gateway Community-Technical College

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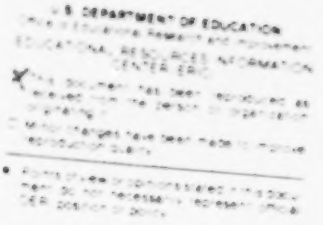

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Massachusetts Cluster

A Practicum Report presented to Nova University in

partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of Doctor of Education

Nova University

December, 1993

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Wilson Luna

December, 1993

The purpose of this practicum was to conduct a needs assessment of the adult learners at Gateway Community-Technical College (GCTC), North Haven Campus. According to the enrollment statistics published by the Registrars Office for the Fall 1993 semester, 75% of the students at the North Haven Campus are between the ages of 22 and 65. In an attempt to answer the research question, this practicum seeks to identify the educational and personal needs of the adult learners.

Several procedures were used to complete this practicum. An extended literature review was conducted to provide a conceptual framework for the study. The literature search focused on educational needs of the adult learner.

After reviewing several commercially produced instruments, the Adult Learner Needs Assessment Survey (ALNAS) was selected. A transmittal letter to the instructors administering the instrument was developed by the Dean of Technology. During the Spring 1993 academic semester, the instrument was administered in class by the evening instructors.

This study produced two major results. First, the literature review produced a better understanding of the unique needs of adult learners. Second, the data collected generated responses from 70% of evening students enrolled in the Spring 1993 semester. The responses dealt with various aspects of education-related needs of adult learners at GCTC.

Realizing that adult learners are becoming the norm on college campuses, a major conclusion of this study was the awareness that GCTC can benefit greatly by addressing the needs of the adult learners. Therefore, the results of the ALNAS will be extremely helpful in the institutions efforts to address those needs.

Recommendations associated with this practicum encouraged college personnel to use the results of the survey to begin to respond to needs of the adult learner. In addition, the administration is encouraged to review its practices and procedures with an eye toward removing institutional obstacles that may exist. Finally, a number of recommendations involved the development of seminars focusing on personal and academic issues.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Background and Significance

Gateway Community-Technical college (GCTC) is a two-year institution of higher education in Connecticut. It is licensed and accredited by the Board of Governors for Higher Education. The college is also accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. GCTC offers over 40 programs or program options that leads either to an associate in arts, associate in science, associate in applied science, or certificate.

As a result of a system wide merger of the community and technical colleges in 1992, Greater New Haven State Technical College and South Central Community merged and became GCTC. The Long Wharf Campus, in New Haven Connecticut, will continue to offer associate degrees and certificates in academic and career programs. The North Haven Campus, formerly Greater New Haven State Technical College, will offer associate degrees and certificates in technology programs. This practicum report focused on the needs of the adult learners at the North Haven Campus.

The purpose of this practicum report was to conduct a needs assessment of the adult learners' at GCTC, North Haven Campus. The results of the ALNAS were used to identify personal and academic needs of the adult learners at GCTC. Presently, the adult learners make up 75% of the total

enrollment at the North Haven Campus. Campus administrators had not previouly conducted a formal assessment of the educational needs of the enrolled adult student. In an effort to maintain enrollments, GCTC's North Haven Campus is developing a three-year retention plan. The results of the needs assessment will be very useful in the development of the retention plan.

As a student counselor in the Student Affairs Division at GCTC, the reseacher is expected to support and advocate for the enhancement and improvement of student services. Assessment is a critical tool to determine the effectiveness and to make recommendations for further improvement.

The needs assessment was extremely helpful in helping college personnel in identifying, developing, and implementing programs that address the needs of the adult learner. It also produced information that would help in the development of strategies and interventions to reduce the attrition of the adult learner.

This practicum relates to the Politics, Law, and Economic of Higher Education Seminar. Meeting the needs of a particular student population, like the adult learners, becomes economically desirable particularly in light of the projected demographic changes. Developing retention initiatives based on the students' perceived educational needs will create better results for the students and the institution.

Research Question

There is one question for this study. The question is, What are the perceived educational needs of the adult learners at GCTC's North Haven Campus?

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A literature review was conducted to identify the perceived needs of the adult students at GCTC. "Needs of adult learners," "adults as learners," "needs of non-traditional students," and "self-directed learners" were used as descriptors to conduct the review. The literature examined was subdivided into three categories. The first category dealt with enrollment statistics in higher education. The second focused on the reasons adult learners return to college, and the third attempted to identify the educational needs of the adult learners.

Enrollment Statistics

As the student population in America's colleges and universities becomes increasingly nontraditional in nature, postsecondary institutions must be sensitive to the needs of the adult learner. According to Elson (1992), "by the year 2000, America's colleges and universities will be lean and mean, multicultural, and increasingly diverse if they intend to survive their fiscal agony" (p. 154). If enrollment projections hold true, then colleges and universities must provide the appropriate academic support services in order to facilitate the educational process for the adult learner. According to Cross (1990), "How higher education handles the competitive and cooperative aspects of the adult market is probably the determining factor over the next ten years in whom the new clientele for higher education will be" (p. 14).

Higher education enrollments have increased over the last twenty years. The increase in enrollments has been attributed to older students who are coming back to college to finish what they began earlier or to begin their studies for the first time. Scholssberg (1987) claims that the nation's demographic changes coupled with economic, technical, and social changes have contributed greatly to the increase of adult learners. According to Aslanian (1992), traditional-age students are no longer the norm on American campuses. In addition, Aslanain reports that the college student who is full-time, in residence, and less than 22 years of age, accounts for only about 20 % of all students in the United States.

According to the U. S. Department of Education, college enrollments have change over the past years. Recent data published by the U.S. Department of Education show that 42% of all college students are 25 years of age or older. In addition, 57% of all college students are 22 years of age and older. Among public institutions, 42% of all enrollments are made up of students 25 years and older and 39% in private institutions, and among two-year institutions, 50% of all enrollment is made up of students 25 and older. These statistics show the increase involvement of adult learners in higher education.

Reasons for Returning to College

The growth of the number of adult college students is attributed to a variety of reasons. For some, it is the first attempt getting a college education, and others are returning after a number of years in the work place. In addition, there are a number of students who return to college after stepping out for a number of years and are in need of a degree to increase their success in entering the job market, upward mobility, or changing jobs or career. The adult audiences seeking higher educational opportunities are diverse according to Apps (1988). They include students returning to school for undergraduate and graduate degrees, professionals required to continue their education, displaced workers, the elderly, and women. According to Aslanian and Brickwell (1980), adult learners return to school as a result of a change of circumstances in their lives. They further suggest that being in transition from one status to another motivates adults to learn. These transitions can include giving birth, unemployment, joining the armed services, divorce, the death of a spouse, disability, or a career change. They also contend that adults return to school for career or family situation. Most women return because of family transitions followed by career transition; but for the most part, men's reasons are the reversed.

Adults returning to college campuses are more than a trend, it's now becoming the norm according to Chickering, Lynch, and Scholssberg (1989).

As the number of adult students continue to increase, institutions of higher education must begin to develop programs and services to meet their needs. Apps (1988) has identified three misconceptions about adult learners that exist on many college campuses. They are as follow: (a) adult students are interested only in academic subjects and thus, are not interested or required student services, (b) home communities will provide the necessary services, and (c) student services for traditional students will meet adult students' needs.

Educational Needs of the Adult Learner

It has become apparent that adult students have unique needs that are different from the traditional students. One striking difference between the adult learners and most other students is that, for adult learners, school is not the primary focus. It is just one of the many demands competing for their time and energy (Chickering, Lynch, and Scholssberg, 1989). Morrison (1993) suggests that "when an adult adds student to other roles such as spouse, parent, and employee, change reverberates throughout the family system" (p. 5). It has become clear that adults do not share common concerns with their young cohorts.

Given the fact that enrollments among adult learners will continue to increase, it will be in the best interest of the colleges and universities to be more attentive to their needs. Through extensive interviews, DeCoster and Mable (1981) found that of all services, students complained most about

academic advising. Lynch, Doyle, and Chickering, (1984), and Kelley, (1985), using the ALNAS, found that adults at 14 college campuses showed that the highest need by adults was career information. Polk (1987) refers to descriptive studies of returning adults that have identified conflicting demands of multiple roles, poor self-image, lack of confidence, sense of isolation in the university community, the need for administrative advice, and educational and career counseling as recurrent themes.

If institutions of higher education are really interested in serving the needs of the adult learners they must be willing to take a comprehensive look at the present student services with an eye on developing program and services that are effective in meeting their needs. Lynton and Elman (1987) suggest that "colleges and universities must handle issues of format, location, and timing of instruction with great flexibility and must adopt, as well, many day-to-day procedures so as to facilitate access by working adults" (p. 97). Schlossberg (1987) recommends that student affairs personnel must thoroughly recognize what adults experiences are, understand adult needs in a complex society, and offer programs and services that deal with the concerns of these individuals. Institutions must become part of the solution than simply another set of problems for the entering adult learner. Chickering, Lynch, and Scholssberg state (1989) "the first area of change is recognizing the difference between adult learners and traditional students and acknowledge adult students

as a vital force in the institution" (p. 114). The second area of change is to connect each adult student to a member of the institutional community. They further state that colleges and universities must move from institutional conveniences to learner convenience. In addition, they must encourage faculty, administrators, and student services to become increasingly proactive in dealing with adult learners. Programs to strengthen self-esteem, build confidence, improve coping skills, and support groups must be developed in order to better serve the adult population.

If college enrollments are going to depend on the participation of the adult learners, then institutions of higher education will need to become more sensitive to the needs of this population. Given the enrollment projections, colleges and universities must become more proactive in servicing the needs of the adult students. This will become more critical for economical survival.

Institutions interested in providing a holding environment for their adult students must be willing to conduct an assessment of the way they deal with them. This assessment is likely to show how well the policies and practices serve adult students. Apps (1988) recommends the following to institutions interested in changing the educational environment for adult students: (a) recognize the obstacles to change, (b) understand systematic assessment, (c) understand and act consistently with basic principles of change process and planned change, and (d) carry out professional developmental activities with

student services staff, administrators, and faculty. These four elements must be addressed in order to create change.

Chickering, Lynch, and Scholssberg (1989) recommend intitutions establish a reentry educational center that coordinates the full range of services and programs. This would allow students to build a solid relationship with the institution. Services and programs to be included are recruitment, pre-admission, counseling, financial aid, educational planning, academic advising, developmental assessment, registration, and assessment of prior learning. According to Bernhard and Rulnick (1992), the academic advising needs of adults who are enrolled or planning to enroll in college can be best meet by developing programs that will deal with short-term needs, long-term needs, and continuing needs for this population. Short-term needs include: credentials for immediate promotion or employment, flexible schedules, credit for life work experience and on-the-job training, improvement of basic skills, orientation to the culture of higher education, and career counseling. Long-term needs include: transferability of associate degree coursework, identifying a major area of study, understanding of graduate, professional schools, and professional licensure requirements. Continuing needs include: financial aid information, establishing benchmark for achievement, scheduling, advising, and personal support.

In summary, the literature review has shown that it is in the interest of GCTC to conduct the needs assessment and use the results to better address the needs of the adult learners. It is essential to move beyond what Apps (1988) has identified as institutional obstacles which colleges and universities need to overcome in order to provide change. These are inertia, traditional socialization, inadequate information about adult learners and about appropriate programs to serve them, emphasis on full time students, and fear of the unknown. Similarly, Checkering, Lynch, and Scholssberg (1989) suggest that the changes needed involve reallocating resources, disrupting organizational patterns, undertaking significant professional development activities, and reorienting the personal and professional postures toward the new client.

The results of ALNAS will help GCTC identify the needs of the adult learners and provide data to develop programs to meet their needs. Hopefully, this intervention will increase retention of students, improve programs, stimulate institutional growth, and increase the enthusiasm of the faculty, staff, and administration. This intervention will hopefully lead to what retention research has pointed out repeatedly that the key variable is a "caring environment."

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Several procedures were used to complete this evaluative practicum. In answering the research question, the study involved the methodology of assessment and evaluation based upon the results.

An extended search of the literature was conducted to provide a conceptual framework for this study. The literature search focused on the educational needs of the adult learners.

After reviewing several commercially produced instruments, the Adult Learner Needs Assessment Survey (ALNAS) was chosen (Appendix A). The Dean of Technology and the Director of counseling were involved in the selection of the survey instrument.

The ALNAS was developed by the American College Testing Program (ACT) after a thorough review of the pertinent literature and in consultation with expert practitioners. The purpose of the ALNAS is to explore the perceived educational and personal needs of adult students. The instrument requires 25 minutes to complete. It contains five sections: background information, educational plans and preferences, personal and educational needs, additional questions, and a section for comments and suggestions.

According to ACT, items in the ALNAS were selected from instruments used in previous large scale ACT research and in local research activities.

Other items were suggested by the literature and by professional educators. In addition, preliminary versions were reviewed by educators from institutions of higher education. The survey instrument was also examined for clarity and accuracy by a small sample of enrolled postsecondary students (ACT, 1981).

The reliability coefficients reported for the ALNAS were obtained from a single administration. Six institutions, public and private were randomly selected. The sample included large, small, two-year, and four-year institutions throughout the United States.

Reliability estimates, by institution and institutional type, based upon the internal consistency of mean item responses was conducted. The analysis yielded reliabilities ranging from .90 to .99 that indicates a high degree of stability in relative ratings of the items. The Reliability of the ALNAS is from .98 to .99 (1981).

A transmittal letter, to the instructors administering the instrument, was developed by the Dean of Technology (Appendix B). In the Spring 1993 semester, the instrument was administered by the instructors to the adult learners in their classes at GCTC's North Haven Campus. The instructors returned the completed surveys to the main office at the end of their class. Four hundred surveys were completed representing 70% of the adult population at GCTC's North Haven Campus. No follow-up procedures were done since

the response rate of 70% indicated in the practicum proposal was accomplished.

Since this is not an inferential study, descriptive statistics were used in analyzing student responses. Results were reported in a tabular and narrative format. Upon completion of the Practicum, a copy of the report was given to the president, the dean of technology, the dean of students, and the director of counseling.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study there was two terms that needed further clarifications. An "adult learner" is an individual whose major responsibilities are other than school. This definition is more inclusive of the cohort that this practicum encompassed. In addition, the terms "adult learners" and "nontraditional students" were used interchangeably throughout this report.

Assumptions

There were several assumptions that applied to this evaluative practicum. First, it was assumed that the survey instrument was a valid tool that would provide relevant and useful information. Second, it was assumed that the instrument was clear to the students. Third, it was assumed that a 70% response rate would provide reliable data from which conclusions can be made. Finally, it was assumed that the respondents answered the questions honestly.

Limitations

There were limitations to this study. The conclusions and recommendations were drawn from students enrolled in the Spring 1993 semester and, therefore, it may not reflect the needs of future students. In addition, the student responses may vary depending on the number of courses completed at GCTC. Finally, the findings of this study apply to the needs of student pursuing an engineering degree and, therefore, may not apply to students enrolled in other programs.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

A careful review of the literature was completed. The literature review was organized into three sections: enrollment statistics, reasons for returning to college, and educational needs of the adult learners. The literature review provided relevant information that was used to develop a conceptual framework for conducting the needs assessment of the adult learner at GCTC.

The first section of the literature focused on enrollment statistics with emphasis on the involvement of the adult learners in higher education. Recent data published by the U.S. Department of Education indicate that 57% of all college students are 22 years of age and older. The second section focused on identifying the reasons adult learners return to college. Many reasons were identified however, Aslanian and Brickwell (1990) suggest that adult learners return to school as a result of a change of circumstances in their lives. Finally, the last section focused on determining the unique needs of the adult learner. Although several needs were identified throughout the literature, career information, academic advising, and educational planning were recurrent themes.

After reviewing several commercially produced instruments, the ALNAS was selected. The Dean of Technology sent a memo to the evening faculty

indicating that the survey was going to be administered in class and requested their cooperation and support in this endeavor (Appendix B).

For two weeks during the month of April 1993, the ALNAS was administered to the evening students at GCTC. Students who had responded to the survey in previous classes were asked not to take it again. Four hundred surveys were completed. This number represented 70% of the adult population at GCTC in the Spring 1993 academic semester.

In August 1993, the completed surveys were mailed to the American College Testing (ACT) for processing. ACT tabulated the responses and a computer report containing one page of information per item was received in September 1993. Findings for each item are presented for the total group of respondents. Any minor discrepancies in the sum totals of the data are the results of the rounding off effect. The results of the survey can be found in Appendix C.

The ALNAS consists of five sections. This report focused on the results of sections one through three. Section four was omitted because it merely provided space for additional questions if necessary. No responses were included in the suggestions or comments section. The sections used were the following: (a) background information, (b) educational plans and references, and (c) personal and educational needs.

In sections I, II, and III of the ALNAS the respondents were asked to select the most appropriate response from several choices. Any item that did not receive a response, either intentionally or unintentionally, was recorded in the "Blank Column." The first section of the instrument requested demographic information. The respondents were asked to respond to ten of the twelve items on the instrument. To ensure honest responses, the students were asked not to identify themselves by providing name, address, telephone number, and social security number in section I of the instrument. The respondents were asked to provide demographic information on age, gender, and marital status among others. The information provided data on the composite characteristics of the sample.

The survey revealed that 65.3% of the respondents were between the ages of 23 and 44. Seventy-seven percent of the respondents were white males. Of those that responded to the marital status question, 42.7% reported that were single and 42.3% were married. More than half (56.9%) reported that they did not have any children. In addition, the survey also revealed that 69.4% of the respondents do not have a college degree. Of the 60.3% who responded that they were employed, 23.5% reported that they were employed in professional or technical positions.

The second section dealt with educational plans and preferences of the adult learners. It included eleven items that focused on personal objectives for

pursuing an education. Some of the questions explored the preferences of the adult learners concerning reasons for continuing their education, enrollment preferences, location of course offerings, and area of study among others.

Seventy-seven percent of the respondents said that they plan to continue their education. Part time status was preferred by 48.1% of the respondents and 50.2% preferred evening classes. Half of the respondents indicated that they prefer classes, that meet twice a week, 45.2% prefer on campus classes and one third prefer a laboratory/shop class format.

Improving their income was reported by 52.3% of the respondents as a major reason for continuing their education, while 31.4% indicated that self improvement was their minor reason, and 54.4% reported that learning to solve personal and communication problems was not a reason. Meeting new people was last in the major reason category and learning to solve personal/communication problems was ranked last in the minor reason category.

Personal earnings were reported as the major source of funding for their education by 48.2% of the respondents. The second major source of funding, reimbursement by employer, was reported by 19.2% of the respondents. Only 20.1% reported that personal earnings were a minor source, while 7.1% reported that employer reimbursement was a minor source for them.

Engineering (33.2%) and trade/technical (19.2%) were the two most popular areas chosen by the respondents as their area of study. These areas were also chosen by the respondents as their occupational choices.

The third section of the ALNAS focused on the personal and educational needs of the adult learner. It consisted of four clusters of items: Life Skills Development, Career Development, Educational Planning, and Association with Others. In the cluster of Life Skills Development, respondents were asked to identify specific learning needs that they perceived as relevant to their personal and professional growth. The second cluster, Career Development, dealt with career planning and development. The respondents were asked to respond to several items dealing with job opportunities, training requirements, and job experience among others. The third cluster, Educational Planning focused on the goals of the adult students in the area of learning needs. This part dealt with areas such as financial aid, counseling, academic advising, and the adequate use of institutional services. The last section, Association with Others included topics that were of direct benefit to the adult learners in their daily association with others at the college, their work place, home, and society.

In section III of the survey instrument, the respondents were asked to indicate whether they needed a lot, medium, or little assistance regarding personal and educational issues. In addition, they were also asked to indicate if

any issues were important to them but no further help was needed, or that it was not important or it did not apply to them. A total of 66 items was listed focusing on the four clusters, 18 items in the life development cluster, 13 items in the career development cluster, 17 items in the educational planning cluster, and 18 items in the association with others cluster.

Based on the total number of responses to each item, a ranking by weighted need index was done. Based on the ranking of items, the following were the top five issues: (a) improving my writing skills, (b) learning how to take tests better, (c) improving my study skills and habits, (d) increasing my mathematical skills, and (e) learning about job opportunities. Four of these items are associated with the life skills development cluster. One item is associated with the career development cluster. Educational planning and association with others did not make the top five issues.

The bottom five issues based on the ranking were as followed: (a) obtaining child care services, (b) coping with problems of a single parent, (c) learning how to get around campus, (d) dealing with problems of divorce, and (e) obtaining services for a physical disability. Two of the areas were associated with life skills development and one area from each of the other clusters.

In the Life Skills Development cluster, 22.2% said that they needed a lot of help in learning how to take test better, 19.2% reported that they needed

a medium amount of help, and 30.5% reported that they needed a little help. The statistics revealed that 19.7% of respondents needed a lot of help in improving their writing skills, while 25.1% reported that they needed a medium amount of help, and 26.8% indicated that they needed a little help. In addition, 19.2% reported that they needed a lot of help with improving their study skills and habits, 23.8% indicated that they needed a medium amount of help, and 28.9% reported needing a little help. Also, 17.6% of the respondents said that they needed a lot of help in increasing their Math Skills, and 26.4% reported that they needed a medium amount of help, while 27.2% revealed that they needed a little help.

In the section dealing with Career Development issues, 26.8% of the respondents said that they needed a lot of help in getting some job experience and 13.8% reported that they needed a medium amount of help, while only 10.9% indicated that they needed a little help. In addition, 21.3% indicated that they needed a lot of help in learning about jobs available near their homes and 20.9% reported that they needed a medium amount of help, while 18% needed a little help. A little over 68% of the respondents said needing either a lot, a medium, or a little amount of help in learning about job opportunities. On the other hand, 52.6% reported that they needed either a lot, a medium, or a little amount of help in learning how to find job openings. Eighteen percent of the respondents indicated that they needed a lot of help in learning about the

income potentials of jobs and obtaining part-time work in their area of interest. Needing a medium amount of help was reported by 21.3% and 13.8% of respondents respectively, and 23.8% and 14.6% said that they needed a little help in this area.

In the section of the Educational Planning cluster, the five top responses needing a lot of help were as follow: (a) learning how to get nontraditional credit, (b) learning more about financial aid, (c) getting advise about my educational plans, (d) obtaining access to college offices, and (e) learning how to transfer prior credits. Issues identified as needing a medium amount of help were as follows: (a) getting advice about my educational plans, (b) learning how to get nontraditional credits, (c) learning more about entrance requirements, (d) selecting my educational program, and (e) learning more about graduation requirements, and learning how to transfer prior credits. Issues needing little help were as follows: (a) learning how to work with academic advisors, (b) learning more about entrance requirements, (c) learning to better use libraries facilities (d) selecting my educational program, and (e) learning more about enrollment requirements.

In the cluster dealing with "Association with Others," the responses in the "need a lot of help" and "need a medium amount of help" categories resulted in single digit percentages with the exception of the issue "dealing with conflicts of job/family/education," which resulted in percentages in the

low teens. In this section, the respondents indicated that they did not need further help in many of the factors on the survey instrument. Seventy-seven percent of the respondents indicated that coping with the problems of a single parent was unimportant or not applicable. Also, 73.6% and 54% reported that dealing with problems of divorce and raising children in todays complex society was unimportant or non applicable respectively.

The information collected in the third section of the ALNAS identified specific needs of the adult learners at GCTC. As stated before, the fourth section was omitted. The fifth section provided space for comments and suggestions.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion

The future of higher education will depend largely on how institutions of higher education respond to the needs of the adult learner. Given the demographic changes, colleges and universities interested in maintaining a competitive edge in the "adult market" must be willing to acknowledge adult students as a vital force. Recruitment and retention programs to increase and maintain adult students must become an institutional priority.

The literature review provided significant information to support the need for institutions of higher education to become more attentive to the needs of the adult learners. It was also extremely useful in identifying some of the obstacles encountered by adult learners on college campuses. Additionally, the literature review provided significant insights as to the reasons why adults return to school.

The literature dealing with enrollment statistics revealed that non-traditional students are becoming the norm rather than the exception. According to Aslanain (1993), the college student who is full-time in residence and is less than 23 years of age accounts for only 20% of all the students in the United States. Given this scenario, colleges and universities must be

willing to accommodate the adult student. As Chickering, Lynch, and Scholssberg (1989) suggests, institutions of higher education must begin to move from institutional convenience to learner convenience.

The literature that focused on the reasons why adult students return to college highlighted a variety of scenarios. Aslanian and Brickwell (1980) seem to suggest that adult learners return to college as a result of a change of circumstances in their lives. Some of these circumstances may include upward mobility, changing a job or a career, divorce, and death of spouse. This section of the literature was helpful in expanding the conceptual framework for the study.

The literature that dealt with the educational needs of the adult learner identified a number of issues which sets them apart from the traditional students. According to Chickering, Lynch and Scholssberg (1989) one striking difference between adult learners and most other students is that, for adult learners, school is not the primary focus, it is one of the many roles competing for their time and energy. Therefore, institutions of higher education must focus on those unique needs in order to develop an environment that is hospitable and establish support programs to help students achieve their academic goals.

It became apparent from the literature that programs dealing with academic and personal issues must be made available to the adult population.

This portion of the literature was beneficial in identifying needs that are common among adult learners in higher education. It was also helpful in influencing the choice of survey instrument that was selected to conduct the study.

The transmittal letter to the instructors administering the survey instrument reinforced the importance of this activity. Administering the survey instrument in class helped achieved the 70% response stated in the practicum proposal. The process of administering the survey was continued until the desired response rate was achieved.

The responses provided significant data regarding the adult learners perceived personal and educational needs at GCTC. The responses focused on four areas that impact the student's ability to achieve their academic goals. These areas were as follow: (a) life skills development, (b) career development, (c) educational planning, and (d) association with others.

As a result of the data, it became apparent that the adult learners at GCTC are deeply concerned about academic and career issues. They indicated that they needed assistance in improving their English and Math skills, improving their test taking and study skills, and learning about career opportunities in their chosen field. The respondents said that they needed little or no assistance with those issues referred to in the survey instrument as "Association with Others." In the career development cluster the respondents

indicated that they need assistance with getting job experience, learning about job opportunities, job hunting skills, and learning about income potential of jobs. This data will be extremely valuable to the retention task force in their effort to develop a retention plan for the campus.

Conclusions

It became apparent that institutions of higher education must conduct needs assessments in order to get a handle on the needs of their adult student population. It was concluded that the literature reviewed seemed to support the findings in the practicum report. It was also concluded that colleges and universities can benefit greatly by providing the appropriate programs and services to meet the needs of the adult population. Given the enrollment projections, adult learners are becoming the norm on college campuses.

As a result of the literature review, it was concluded that GCTC's retention rate can be greatly enhanced by providing programs and services to support the adult learners' academic and personal needs. Additionally, it was concluded that the college must review the current policies and procedures in order to determine if they are cumbersome and/or are obstacles for the adult learners.

The conclusions drawn from the survey seem to suggest that the adult students at GCTC are highly concerned with academic and personal issues. It was concluded that improving Math and English skills were two areas where

the respondents felt that they needed assistance. In addition, improving their study skills and learning test-taking strategies were also a major concern for the respondents. Finally, it was concluded that if the college is interested in moving ahead with its plans to better serve the needs of the adult population, it must recognize their unique needs and acknowledge that they are a vital force in the college.

Implications

Based on the conclusions drawn from this report, a number of implications became apparent. If GCTC is interested in better serving the needs of the adult learners, then it must develop programs, services, and strategies to respond to the needs identified in the ALNAS. The respondents identified academic issues in which they felt they needed assistance. English and math skills, study skills, and test-taking strategies were areas identified by the respondents. It appears that academic support services are important to the adult learners at GCTC. This being the case, then it is essential that these services are provided in order to make academic support available to students.

A second implication stemmed from the survey results which suggested that the respondents needed help with career issues. Over 60% of the respondents said that they needed some level of help with learning about employment opportunities. Additionally, over 50% of the respondents also indicated that they needed help with learning how to find job openings. If the

students need assistance with employment opportunities, then the student services must develop programs to address this issue. Furthermore, given the economic conditions and the unemployment rate in the state, the college must establish services to respond to the ever changing employment needs in Connecticut. Collaborative efforts between business and industry must be developed and encouraged to respond to economic needs of state, region, and the nation.

The results dealing with personal and educational needs seems to suggest a third implication. The respondents indicated that academic advising was an important issue for them. Learning about nontraditional credits, program requirements, and transfer credits was identified as areas where the respondents needed help. Almost 60% of the respondents indicated that they needed help in getting advise about their educational plans. The literature review seems to imply that academic advising is an important issue for adult learners. If academic advising and career counseling are important issues for the students, then the student services department should make these services available during evening hours.

Finally, an implication stemming from the literature review seems to suggest that the institution must recognize the unique needs of the adult learners and acknowledge that they are a vital force in the college. As the demographics patterns continue to change this implication will be more vital

than ever. The economic, social, and demographic changes will have an impact on the college as a whole.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made as a result of this practicum:

1. Survey results should be shared with all interested members of the college community.

2. The Retention Task Force should review the results of the ALNAS.

3. Study skills courses should be offered in the evening.

4. Academic support seminars should be offered on a regular basis in the evenings. Topics can include time management, note-taking skills, test-taking strategies, library skills, learning styles, etc.

5. The Retention Task Force should use the results of the ALNAS to develop goals and objectives which addresses the needs of the adult learners. These goals and objectives should be incorporated in the college's retention plan.

6. Academic advising should be more accessible to the evening students.

7. Career services should be made available at least four evenings a week.

8. Conduct an audit of the policies and procedures to ensure that they are not creating obstacles for the adult learners.

9. Evening coverage should be provided by those offices that provide a direct service to students. Offices like Admissions, Counseling, Financial Aid, Career Services, Business Office, Registrars, and Academic Advising provide essential services needed by evening students.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Needs Assessment Survey

ADULT LEARNER NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

DIRECTIONS: The Adult Learner Needs Assessment Survey is an untimed questionnaire designed to evaluate the education-related needs of adult learners. By answering the following questions, you will assist college officials in identifying and developing programs and services that better address the needs of individuals like yourself.

The information you supply on this questionnaire will be kept confidential. Your name, address, telephone number, and Social Security number will enable college personnel to identify your responses and contact you directly. The data you supply will be used for research purposes and will not be individually listed on any report. If, however, any question requests information that you do not wish to provide, feel free to omit it.

Please use a soft-lead (No. 1 or 2) pencil to fill in the ovals indicating your responses. DO NOT use a ball-point pen, nylon-tip or felt-tip pen, fountain pen, marker, or colored pencil. Some items may not apply to you. If this is the case, skip these items. If you wish to change your response to an item, erase your first mark completely and then blacken the correct oval. Select only ONE response for each item.

SECTION I—BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Begin by filling in your name, address, and telephone number in Block A. Next, write your Social Security number in the large boxes at the top of Block B, and blacken the appropriate oval in the column below each box. Complete the remaining blocks by blackening the single most appropriate oval in each case.

A NAME, ADDRESS, AND TELEPHONE NUMBER

Name

Street Address

City State Zip Code

Telephone

B SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (Identification Number)

C AGE

- 19 or Under
- 20-22
- 23-25
- 26-29
- 30-34
- 35-39
- 40-44
- 45-49
- 50-54
- 55-61
- 62 and Over

D RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP

- Afro-American/Black
- American Indian, Alaskan Native
- Caucasian-American/White
- Mexican-American/Chicano
- Asian-American, Oriental, Pacific Islander
- Puerto Rican, Cuban, Other Hispanic Origin
- Other
- Prefer Not to Respond

E SEX

- Male
- Female

F MARITAL STATUS

- Single (Never Married)
- Married
- Divorced
- Separated
- Widowed
- Prefer Not to Respond

G NUMBER OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN CURRENTLY LIVING IN YOUR HOME

- None
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 or more

H WHAT IS THE *HIGHEST* LEVEL OF FORMAL EDUCATION THAT YOU HAVE COMPLETED? (Select Only ONE)

- Attended Elementary School
- Completed Elementary School
- Attended High School
- Completed High School
- Obtained High School Equivalent Degree (GED)
- Took Vocational/Technical School Courses
- Completed a Vocational/Technical School Program
- Attended College (2-Yr. College, University, etc.) but Did Not Complete a Degree
- Received Associate Degree
- Received Bachelor's Degree
- Received Master's Degree
- Received PhD or Professional Degree

I HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE YOU WERE LAST ENROLLED IN COURSES FOR CREDIT? (To the Nearest Year)

- I'm Currently Enrolled in Course(s) for Credit
- Less Than 1 Year
- 1 Year
- 2-3 Years
- 4-6 Years
- 7-10 Years
- More Than 10 Years

J WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME? (Include Both Taxable and Nontaxable Income)

- Less Than $6,000
- $6,000 to $8,999
- $9,000 to $11,999
- $12,000 to $14,999
- $15,000 to $17,999
- $18,000 to $20,999
- $21,000 to $23,999
- $24,000 to $26,999
- $27,000 to $29,999
- $30,000 to $34,999
- $35,000 to $39,999
- $40,000 to $44,999
- $45,000 to $50,000
- Over $50,000
- Prefer Not to Respond

K WHICH ONE OF THE FOLLOWING *BEST* DESCRIBES WHAT YOU ARE CURRENTLY DOING? (Blacken Only ONE Oval)

- Employed (Including Full-Time and Part-Time Employment, Self-Employment, Farming, etc.)
- Continuing My Education (College, Vocational School, etc.)
- Serving in the Armed Forces
- Caring for a Home/Family
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Other

L IF YOU ARE CURRENTLY EMPLOYED, PLEASE INDICATE YOUR TYPE OF OCCUPATION. (If Not Employed, Leave this Question Blank.)

- Clerical or Secretarial Worker (Typist, Bookkeeper, etc.)
- Craftsman or Foreman (Carpenter, Bricklayer, etc.)
- Farmer, Rancher
- Laborer (Construction Worker, Longshoreman, etc.)
- Machine or Vehicle Operator
- Professional/Technical (Lawyer, Teacher, Administrator, Medical Technician, etc.)
- Proprietor, Manager, Business Owner
- Sales Worker (Retail Sales, Insurance Sales, etc.)
- Service Worker (Janitor, Cook, etc.)
- Other

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SECTION II—EDUCATIONAL PLANS AND PREFERENCES

Please respond to each of the following questions dealing with your educational plans by blackening the single most appropriate oval in each case. If a question does not apply to you, leave it blank. If you mark "No" or "Undecided" to the first question, skip the remainder of this page and go on to page 3 of this questionnaire.

A ARE YOU CURRENTLY PLANNING TO CONTINUE YOUR EDUCATION? (Vocational School, College, Correspondence Course, etc.)

- ○ No
- ○ Undecided } (SKIP TO PAGE 3 OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE)
- ○ Yes (Continue with This Section)

NOTE: If you marked "No" or "Undecided" to the previous question, skip the remainder of this page and go on to pages 3 and 4 of this questionnaire.

If you marked "Yes" to the previous question, complete the remainder of this page and then go on to pages 3 and 4 of this questionnaire.

B INDICATE WHETHER EACH OF THE FOLLOWING IS A MAJOR REASON, MINOR REASON, OR NOT A REASON THAT YOU DECIDED TO CONTINUE YOUR EDUCATION.

MAJOR REASON	MINOR REASON	NOT A REASON	
○	○	○	To Obtain a Higher Degree
○	○	○	For Personal Satisfaction or Happiness
○	○	○	To Obtain or Maintain a Certification
○	○	○	To Meet Job Requirements or Improve Job Skills
○	○	○	For General Self-Improvement
○	○	○	To Meet New People
○	○	○	To Become Better Educated and Informed
○	○	○	To Improve My Income
○	○	○	To Learn a New Occupation
○	○	○	To Learn How to Solve Personal or Community Problems

C INDICATE WHETHER EACH OF THE FOLLOWING WILL BE A MAJOR SOURCE, MINOR SOURCE, OR NOT A SOURCE OF FUNDS FOR YOUR EDUCATION.

MAJOR SOURCE OF FUNDS	MINOR SOURCE OF FUNDS	NOT A SOURCE OF FUNDS	
○	○	○	Personal Earnings
○	○	○	Other Family Income
○	○	○	Personal or Family Savings
○	○	○	Funds from Relatives or Friends
○	○	○	Social Security Benefits
○	○	○	Veteran's Benefits
○	○	○	Educational Grants (BEOG, SEOG, Private Grants, etc.)
○	○	○	Scholarships (Private, Federal, College, etc.)
○	○	○	Student Loans (NDSL, Guaranteed Student Loan, etc.)
○	○	○	Other Loans (Bank Loans, etc.)
○	○	○	Reimbursement by Employer

D WHICH TYPE OF ENROLLMENT STATUS DO YOU PREFER?

- ○ Full-Time Status
- ○ Part-Time Status

E WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF CLASSES IS *MOST* CONVENIENT FOR YOU TO ATTEND? (Select Only ONE)

- ○ Morning Classes
- ○ Classes Offered Over Noon Hour
- ○ Afternoon Classes
- ○ Evening Classes
- ○ Weekend Classes
- ○ No Preference

F HOW FREQUENTLY DO YOU FEEL EACH OF YOUR COURSES SHOULD MEET?

- ○ Once Weekly
- ○ Twice Weekly
- ○ 3 or 4 Times Weekly
- ○ 5 or More Times Weekly
- ○ Other
- ○ No Preference

G WHICH TYPE OF CLASS DO YOU PREFER?

- ○ A Class Composed Primarily of Adult Students
- ○ A Class with Students of Mixed Ages
- ○ No Preference

H WHERE DO YOU PREFER TO ATTEND CLASSES?

- ○ At an On-Campus Location (College Classroom, Industrial Arts Center, etc.)
- ○ At an Off-Campus Location Near Home or Job (Office Building, High School Classroom, etc.)
- ○ No Preference

I WHICH TYPE OF CLASS FORMAT DO YOU *MOST* PREFER? (Select Only ONE)

- ○ Traditional Lecture Format
- ○ Small-Group Format
- ○ Independent Study Format (Self-Paced Study)
- ○ Laboratory or Shop Format (with Hands-On Experience)
- ○ Private Tutor Format
- ○ Correspondence Course Format
- ○ Other Format
- ○ No Preference

USING THE LIST OF COLLEGE MAJORS AND OCCUPATIONAL CHOICES INCLUDED WITH THIS QUESTIONNAIRE, PLEASE SELECT THE THREE-DIGIT CODES FOR YOUR PLANNED MAJOR AREA OF STUDY AND FOR YOUR OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE. WRITE THESE CODES IN THE BOXES AT THE TOP OF BLOCKS J AND K, AND BLACKEN THE APPROPRIATE OVAL IN THE COLUMN BELOW EACH BOX. (IF YOU PLAN TO HAVE MORE THAN ONE MAJOR AREA OF STUDY, SELECT THE ONE CODE THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM.)

J INDICATE YOUR PLANNED AREA OF STUDY

K INDICATE YOUR OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE

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SECTION III—PERSONAL AND EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

For each of the items listed in this section, blacken the oval that best indicates your educational or personal needs. Mark the first column if you feel that you need a lot of assistance in the area described in the item. Mark the last column if the item is not important or does not apply to you. Mark only ONE oval for each item.

I need a lot of help in this area.	I need a medium amount of help in this area.	I need a little help in this area.	This area is important, but I need no further help.	This area is not important or does not apply to me.	
					EXAMPLES
○	○	●	○	○	A. Developing independence
○	○	○	○	●	B. Learning how to concentrate better
●	○	○	○	○	C. Getting out of bed in the morning
					LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
○	○	○	○	○	1. Increasing my skills in mathematics
○	○	○	○	○	2. Improving my writing skills
○	○	○	○	○	3. Developing my speaking ability
○	○	○	○	○	4. Improving my understanding of what I read
○	○	○	○	○	5. Increasing my reading speed
○	○	○	○	○	6. Improving my study skills and habits
○	○	○	○	○	7. Learning how to take tests better
○	○	○	○	○	8. Developing and demonstrating confidence in myself
○	○	○	○	○	9. Learning how to handle pressure from friends, family, instructors, or myself
○	○	○	○	○	10. Learning how to better make decisions and solve personal problems
○	○	○	○	○	11. Becoming more independent
○	○	○	○	○	12. Setting goals in my life
○	○	○	○	○	13. Learning how to manage my time better
○	○	○	○	○	14. Learning how to budget money more wisely
○	○	○	○	○	15. Learning how to maintain my physical and mental health
○	○	○	○	○	16. Understanding my rights and responsibilities as a consumer
○	○	○	○	○	17. Learning effectively on my own
○	○	○	○	○	18. Learning how to use my leisure time to get more out of life
					CAREER DEVELOPMENT (EXPLORING, PLANNING, WORKING)
○	○	○	○	○	19. Identifying my strengths and abilities
○	○	○	○	○	20. Identifying career areas which will fit my current skills, abilities, and interests
○	○	○	○	○	21. Learning about job opportunities in my career interest areas
○	○	○	○	○	22. Learning more about training requirements for jobs I'm interested in
○	○	○	○	○	23. Learning about the income potentials of jobs in my career interest areas
○	○	○	○	○	24. Learning where to get the training necessary for jobs in my career interest areas
○	○	○	○	○	25. Getting some full-time job experience in a new career area
○	○	○	○	○	26. Arranging to discuss my career interests with people employed in the same area
○	○	○	○	○	27. Obtaining part-time work in my career interest area
○	○	○	○	○	28. Learning how to find job openings
○	○	○	○	○	29. Learning more about how to interview for a job
○	○	○	○	○	30. Learning how to develop a personal vita or resume
○	○	○	○	○	31. Learning what jobs are available near where I wish to live
					EDUCATIONAL PLANNING
○	○	○	○	○	32. Getting advice about my educational plans
○	○	○	○	○	33. Learning more about entrance requirements for educational programs that interest me
○	○	○	○	○	34. Selecting an educational program to meet my interests and skills
○	○	○	○	○	35. Learning more about enrollment procedures (registration, fee payment, etc.)
○	○	○	○	○	36. Learning more about financial aid for students my age
○	○	○	○	○	37. Obtaining help with college re-entry procedures
○	○	○	○	○	38. Learning more about graduation requirements
○	○	○	○	○	39. Learning more about how to transfer prior credits
○	○	○	○	○	40. Securing transportation to and from campus (car-pooling, mass transit, etc.)
○	○	○	○	○	41. Learning how to make better use of library facilities
○	○	○	○	○	42. Obtaining child care services

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SECTION III CONTINUED

I need a lot of help in this area.	I need a medium amount of help in this area.	I need a little help in this area.	This area is important, but I need no further help.	This area is not important or does not apply to me.	
					ED. PLANNING (Continued)
0	0	0	0	0	43. Obtaining special services for physically handicapped students
0	0	0	0	0	44. Learning how to get around campus (parking, building names, etc.)
0	0	0	0	0	45. Arranging a class schedule that will not conflict with my current job
0	0	0	0	0	46. Obtaining access to college offices at times other than when I work
0	0	0	0	0	47. Learning how to get course credit through nontraditional means (CLEP, job experience, etc.)
0	0	0	0	0	48. Learning about noncredit courses that will meet my needs
					ASSOCIATIONS WITH OTHERS
0	0	0	0	0	49. Learning how to work with my academic advisor
0	0	0	0	0	50. Learning how to communicate better with instructors
0	0	0	0	0	51. Learning how to relate better with younger students
0	0	0	0	0	52. Getting along better with the people I work with
0	0	0	0	0	53. Understanding and expressing my personal values
0	0	0	0	0	54. Learning how to make more or closer friends
0	0	0	0	0	55. Learning how to improve my personal appearance
0	0	0	0	0	56. Getting my family interested in my education and career
0	0	0	0	0	57. Coping with the problems of being a single parent
0	0	0	0	0	58. Dealing with the problems of divorce or separation
0	0	0	0	0	59. Raising children in today's complex society
0	0	0	0	0	60. Gaining a better understanding of people of different races and cultural backgrounds
0	0	0	0	0	61. Dealing with people who think and feel differently than I do
0	0	0	0	0	62. Learning how to deal effectively with community problems
0	0	0	0	0	63. Learning how to participate in governmental activities
0	0	0	0	0	64. Dealing objectively with discrimination (race, sex, age, etc.)
0	0	0	0	0	65. Coping with marital stresses and problems
0	0	0	0	0	66. Dealing with the conflicts of job, family, and education

SECTION IV—ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

If an additional set of multiple-choice questions is included with this form, please use this section to record your responses. Twelve ovals are provided for each question, but few questions require that many choices. Simply ignore the extra ovals. If no additional questions are included, leave this section blank.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b	b
c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c	c
d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d
e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e
f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f	f
g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g	g
h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h	h
i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i	i
j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j	j
k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k	k
l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l

SECTION V—COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

If you wish to make any comments or suggestions, please use the lines provided below.

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE

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APPENDIX B

Transmittal Letter

SOUTH CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE
GREATER NEW HAVEN STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE

A Merged Institution

To: Evening Faculty

From: Robert Zabek, Dean of Technology

Re: Needs Assessment Survey

Date: 4/1/93

The Student Services Dept. is conducting a needs assessment survey to evaluate the educational-related needs of adult learners at Gateway Community Technical College's North Haven Campus. The results of the survey will help in identifying and developing programs and services that better address their needs. We are soliciting your support and coope ation by administering the survey in class.

The survey will take approximately 25 minutes to complete. With your help we would like to administer the survey April 19-22, 1993. A copy of the survey is enclosed for your information. Materials and instructions will be provided the day of the administration. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Wilson Luna at 234-3335. Mr. Luna is coordinating the administration of the survey. He will leave all of the materials for you in the Main Office with instructions. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.

cc: Gladys Ramos, Evening Administrator
Al Carter, Evening Administrator
Wilson Luna, Counselor

- -

Please indicate which night you prefer to administer and the number of students in your class. Please return this form to Wilson Luna by Thursday, April 8, 1993. Thank you.

Faculty:_____

Class:_____

Room:_____

Preferred Night:_____

Number of Students:_____

Appendix C

Results of the ALNAS

Section I-Background information-Number and percentage of respondents.

Age

19 or under	20-22	23-25	26-29	30-34	35-39
34 (8.4%)	40 (10%)	28 (7.1%)	60 (15.1%)	60(15.1%)	67 (16.7%)
40-44	45-49	50-54	55-61	62 and over	Blank
45 (11.3%)	20 (5.0%)	8 (2.1%)	8 (2.1%)	2 (0.4%)	28 (7.1%)

Race/Ethnic Group

Black	Native American	White	Mexican Origin	Oriental Asian
17 (4.2%)	2 (0.4%)	310 (77.4%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (1.7%)

Other Hispanic	Other	Prefer Not to Respond	Blank
13 (3.3%)	5 (1.3%)	25 (6.3%)	22 (5.4%)

Sex

Male	Female	Blank
308 (77.0%)	74 (18.4%)	18 (4.6%)

Marital Status

Single	Married	Divorced	Separated	Widowed
171(42.7%)	169 (42.3%)	28 (7.1%)	2 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)

No Response	Blank
8 (2.1)	22 (5.4%)

Number of dependent children currently living in your home.

None	1	2	3	4 or more
228 (56.9%)	48 (12.1%)	77 (19.2%)	20 (5.0%)	7 (1.7%)

Blank
20 (5.0%)

Background information (Cont.)

What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

Attended Elem.	Completed Elem.	Attended H.S.	Completed H.S.	Took GED	Took Voc/Tec
0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	100 (25.1%)	8(2.1%)	18 (4.6%)

Completed Voc/Tec	Attended Coll.	Received Assoc.Degree	Received B.A. Degree	Masters Degree
47 (11.7%)	104 (25.9%)	45 (11.3%)	35 (8.8%)	8 (2.1%)

P.hD. Etc.	Blank
0 (0.0%)	34 (8.4%)

How long has it been since you were last enrolled in courses for credit?

Now enroll	Under 1 yr.	1 year	2-3 years
283 (70.7%)	25 (6.3%)	10 (2.5%)	22 (5.4%)
4-6 yrs.	7-10 yrs.	Over 10 yrs.	Blank
10 (2.5%)	10 (2.5%)	17 (4.2%)	24 (5.9%)

What is your current annual family income? (in thousands of dollars).

<6	6-9	9-12	12-15	15-18
27 (6.7%)	10 (2.5%)	12 (2.9%)	8 (2.1%)	10 (2.5%)
18-21	21-24	24-27	27-30	30-35
15 (3.8%)	13 (3.3%)	15 (3.8%)	22 (5.4%)	22 (5.4%)
40-45	45-50	>50	Prefer Not	Blank
20 (5.0%)	28 (7.1%)	72 (18%)	55 (13.8%)	50 (12.6%)

Which of the following best describe what you are currently doing?

Employed	Cont. Ed.	Arm. Forces	Home/Fam.	Unemploy.
241 (60.3%)	79 (19.7)	0 (0.0%)	3 (0.8%)	30 (7.5%)
Retired	Other	Blank		
5 (1.3%)	12 (2.9%)	30 (7.5%)		

Background information (Cont.)

If you are currently employed, please indicate your type of occupation.

Clerical	Craftsman	Farmer	Laborer	Mac.Oper.
17 (4.2%)	38 (9.6%)	2 (0.04%)	22 (5.4%)	10 (2.5%)
Prof. Tech.	Manager	Sales	Service	Other
94 (23.4%)	12 (2.9%)	13 (3.3%)	13 (3.3)	82 (20.5%)
Blank				
97 (24.3%)				

II-Educational Plans and Preferences.

Planning to continue your education.

No	Undecided	Yes	Blank
12 (2.9)	40 (10.0%0	308 (77.0%)	40 (10.0%)

Indicate whether the following is a major, minor, or not a reason you decided to continue your education.

	Major Reason	Minor Reason	Not a Reason	Blank
To obtain a higher degree.	192 (48.1%)	55 (13.8%)	64 (15.9%)	88 (22.2%)
Personal Satisfaction or happiness.	152 (38.1%)	109 (27.2%)	40 (10.0%)	99 (24.7%)
To obtain or maintain a certification.	117 (29.3%)	58 (14.6%)	119 (29.7%)	106(26.4%)
For general self-improvement.	123 (31.0%)	126 (31.4%)	45 (11.3%)	106 (26.4%)
To meet new people.	15 (3.8%)	67 (16.7%)	206 (51.5%)	122 (28.0%)
To become better educated and informed.	188 (46.9%)	85 (21.3%)	30 (7.5%)	97 (24.3%)
To improve my income.	209 (52.3%)	67 (16.7%)	27 (6.7%)	97 (24.3%)
To learn a new occupation.	140 (35.1%)	72 (18.0%)	87 (21.8)	100 (25.1%)
To learn to solve personal/ communication problems.	30 (7.5%)	53 (13.0%)	218 (54.4%)	100 (25.1%)

Background information (Cont.)

Indicate whether the following will be a major, minor, or not a source of funding for your education:

	Major Source	Minor Source	Not a Source	Blank
Personal earnings.	181 (45.2%)	80 (20.1%)	55 (13.8%)	84 (20.9%)
Other family income.	38 (9.6%)	42 (10.5%)	204 (51.0%)	116 (28.9%)
Funds from relatives or friends.	8 (2.1%)	22 (5.4%)	256 (64.0%)	114 (28.5%)
Social Security Benefits.	3 (0.8%)	8 (2.1%)	274 (68.6%)	114 (28.5%)
Veterans Benefits.	22 (5.4%)	5 (1.3%)	264 (66.1%)	109 (27.2%)
Educational Grants (Pell, Seog, Private)	54 (13.4%)	22 (5.4%)	214 (53.6%)	110 (27.5)
Scholarships (Private, Federal) etc.	27 (6.7%)	35 (8.8%)	226 (56.5%)	112 (28.0%)
Other loans, Banks, etc.	8 (2.1%)	27 (6.7%)	249 (62.3%)	116 (28.9%)
Reimbursement by employer.	77 (19.2%)	28 (7.1%)	188 (46.9)	107 (26.8%)

Which type of enrollment do you prefer?

Full Time Status	Part Time Status	Blank
144 (36.0%)	192 (48.1%)	64 (15.9%)

Which of the following types of classes is most convenient for you to attend?

Morning Classes	Noon Hour Classes	Afternoon Classes	Evening Classes
69 (17.2%)	8 (2.1%)	15 (3.8%)	201 (50.2%)

Weekend Classes	No Pre-Ference	Blank
8 (2.1%)	27 (6.7%)	72 (18.0%)

Background information (Cont.)

How frequently do you feel each your courses should meet?

Once Weekly	Twice Weekly	3-4 Times Weekly	5+ Times Weekly
70 (17.6%)	202 (50.6%)	40 10.0%)	2 (0.4%)
Other	No Pre-ference	Blank	
3 (0.8%)	20 (5.0%)	62 (15.5%)	

Which types of classes do you prefer?

Primarily Adults	Mixed Ages	No Pre-Ference	Blank
32 (7.9%)	129 (32.2%)	178 (44.4%)	62 (15.5%)

Where do you prefer to attend classes?

On-Campus Location	Off-Campus Location	No Pre-Ference	Blank
181 (45.2%)	57 (14.2%)	99 (24.7%)	64 (15.9%)

Which type of class format do you most prefer?

Lecture	Small Group	Indepen-dent study	Laboratory or shop
64 (15.9%)	99 (24.7%)	3 (0.8%)	132 (33.1%)
Private Tutor	Correspon-dence	No Pre-Other	ference
5 (1.3%)	2 (0.4%)	2 (0.4%)	34 (8.4%)
Blank			
60 (15.1%)			

Background information (Cont.)

Planned area of study.

Undecided	Agri-culture	Archi-tecture	Biological Sciences
3 ((0.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.4%)
Business Commerce	Communi-cations	Computer Science	Education
18 (4.6%)	5 (1.3%)	27 (6.7%)	7 (1.7%)
Engi-neering	Applied/ Fine Arts	Foreign Languages	Health Professions
132 (33.1%)	2 (0.4%)	0 (0.0)	17 (4.2%)
Home Economics	Mathe-Letters	Physical matics	Science
0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.4%)
Community Service	Social Sciences	Trade/ Technical	General Studies
5 (1.3%)	0 (0.0%)	77 (19.2%)	5 (1.3%)
Blank			
99 (24.7%)			

Background information (Cont.)

Occupational choice.

Undecided	Agri-culture	Archi-tecture	Biological Sciences
10 (2.5%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.4%)
Business Commerce	**Communi-cations**	**Computer Science**	**Education**
22 (5.4%)	3 (0.8%)	24 (5.9%)	7 (1.7%)
Engi-neering	**Applied/ Fine Arts**	**Foreign Languages**	**Health Professions**
92 (23.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	22 (5.4%)
Home Economics	**Mathe-Letters**	**Physical matics**	**Science**
2 ((0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Community Service	**Social Sciences**	**Trade/ Technical**	**General Studies**
3 (0.8%)	0 (0.0%)	97 (24.3%)	2 (0.4%)
Blank			
116 (28.9%			

Section III-Personal and Educational Needs.

Please indicate whether you need a lot, medium, or a little assistance in the areas described or whether the area is important, but you need no further help or if this area is not important or does not apply to you.

Life skills Development Cluster	Need a lot of help	Need med. amt. of help	Need a little help	Need no further help	Unimportant or N/A	Blank
Increasing my skills in Mathematics.	70 (17.6%)	106 (26.4%)	109 (27.2%)	74 (18.4%)	12 (2.9%)	30 (7.5%)
Improving my writing skills.	79 (19.7%)	100 (25.1%)	107 (26.8%)	69 (17.2%)	18 (4.6%)	27 (6.7%)
Developing my speaking ability.	60 (15.1%)	106 (26.4%)	109 (27.2%)	75 (18.8%)	22 (5.4%)	28 (7.1%)
Improving my understanding of what I read.	42 (10.5%)	95 (23.8%)	104 (25.9%)	106 (26.4%)	22 (5.4%)	32 (7.9%)
Increasing my reading speed	62 (15.5%)	94 (23.4%)	102 (25.5%)	80 (20.1%)	32 (7.9%)	30 (7.5%)
Improving my study skills and habits.	77 (19.2%)	95 (23.8%)	116 (28.9%)	69 (17.2%)	12 (2.9%)	32 (7.9%)
Learning how to take tests better.	89 (22.2%)	77 (19.2%)	122 (30.5%)	70 (17.6%)	17 (4.2%)	25 (6.3%)
Developing confidence in myself.	44 (10.9%)	84 (20.9%)	107 (26.8%)	100 (25.1%)	35 (8.8%)	30 (7.5%)
Learning how to handle pressure.	37 (9.2%)	57 (14.2%)	87 (21.8%)	104 (35.1%)	50 (12.6%)	28 (7.1%)
Learning how to make better decisions.	28 (7.1%)	55 (13.8%)	107 (26.8%)	130 (32.6%)	48 (12.1%)	30 (7.5%)
Becoming more independent.	13 (3.3%)	38 (9.6%)	65 (16.3%)	182 (45.6%)	72 (18.0%)	28 (7.1%)
Setting goals in my life.	24 (6.3%)	64 (15.9%)	95 (23.8%)	137 (34.3%)	48 (12.1%)	30 (7.5%)
Learning how to manage my time better.	37 (9.2%)	77 (19.2%)	94 (23.4%)	120 (30.1%)	42 (10.5%)	30 (7.5%)

Educational and Educational Needs (Cont.)	Need a lot of help	Need med. amt. of help	Need a little help	Need no further help	Unimportant or N/A	Blank
Learning how to budget money more wisely.	55 (13.8%)	62 (15.5%)	77 (19.2%)	127 (31.8%)	49 (12.1%)	30 (7.5%)
Learning how to maintain my health.	40 (10.0%)	60 (15.1%)	97 (24.3%)	139 (34.7%)	35 (8.8%)	28 (7.1%)
Understanding my consumer rights and responsibilities.	20 (5.0%)	52 (13.0%)	106 (26.4%)	140 (35.1%)	50 (12.6%)	32 (7.9%)
Learning effectively on my own.	25 (6.3%)	58 (14.6%)	92 (23.0%)	149 (37.2%)	45 (11.3%)	30 (7.5%)
Learning how to use my leisure time.	37 (9.2%)	62 (15.5%)	75 (18.8%)	132 (33.1%)	65 (16.3%)	28 (7.1%)
Career Development Cluster						
Identifying my strengths and abilities.	28 (7.1%)	58 (14.6%)	112 (28.0%)	129 (32.2)	47 (11.7%)	25 ((6.3%)
Identifying career areas which fit my skills.	55 (13.8%)	74 (18.4%)	100 (25.1%)	109 (27.2%)	35 (8.8%)	27 (6.7%)
Learning about job opportunities.	79 ((19.7)	94 (23.4%)	100 (25.1%)	72 (18.0%)	24 (5.9%)	32 (7.9%)
Learning more about training requirements.	67 (16.7%)	91 (22.2%)	107 (26.8%)	84 (20.9%)	28 (7.1%)	25 (6.3%)
Learning about the income potentials of jobs.	72 (18.0%)	85 (21.3%)	95 (23.8%)	80 (20.1%)	40 (10.0%)	27 (6.7%)
Learning where to get necessary training.	57 (14.2%)	90 (22.6%)	90 (22.6%)	94 (23.4%)	44 (10.9%)	25 (6.3%)
Getting some job experience in my area.	107 (26.8%)	55 (13.8%)	44 (10.9%)	100 (25.1%)	69 (17.2%)	25 (6.3%)
Arranging to discuss my career interests.	57 (14.2%)	65 (16.3%)	79 (19.7%)	100 (25.1%)	72 (18.0%)	27 (6.7%)

Personal and Educational Needs (Cont.)	Need a lot of help	Need med. amt. of help	Need a little help	Need no further help	Unimportant or N/A	Blank
Obtaining part-time work in my interest area.	72 (18.0%)	55 (13.8%)	58 (14.6%)	67 (16.7%)	119 (29.7%)	28 (7.1%)
Learning how to find job openings.	77 (19.2%)	67 (16.7%)	67 (16.7%)	92 (23.0%)	72 (18.0%)	25 (6.3%)
Learning more about how to interview for job.	70 (17.6%)	80 (20.1%)	97 (24.3%)	75 (18.8%)	48 (12.1%)	28 (7.1%)
Learning how to develop a vita or resume.	58 (14.6%)	87 (21.8%)	97 (24.3%)	85 (21.3%)	45 (11.3%)	27 (6.7%)
Learning what jobs are available near home.	85 (21.3%)	84 (20.9%)	72 (18.0%)	85 (21.3%)	50 (12.6%)	24 (5.9%)
Educational Planning Cluster						
Getting advice about my educational plans.	69 (17.2%)	90 (22.6%)	79 (19.7%)	90 (22.6%)	47 (11.7%)	25 (6.3%)
Learning more about entrance requirements.	37 (9.2%)	67 (16.7%)	95 (23.8%)	104 (25.9%)	70 (17.6%)	27 (6.7%)
Selecting my educational program.	50 (12.6%)	62 (15.5%)	87 (21.8%)	119 (29.7%)	54 (13.4%)	28 (7.1%)
Learning more about enrollment requirements.	30 (7.5%)	54 (13.4%)	82 (20.5%)	134 (33.5%)	72 (18.0%)	28 (7.1%)
Learning more about financial aid.	70 (17.6%)	57 (14.2%)	62 (15.5%)	82 (20.5%)	104 (25.9%)	25 (6.3%)
Obtaining help with college re-entry.	15 (3.8%)	35 (8.8%)	67 (16.7%)	140 (35.1%)	114 (28.5%)	28 (7.1%)
Learning more about graduation requirements.	34 (8.4%)	60 (15.1%)	77 (19.2%)	130 (32.6%)	70 (17.6%)	28 (7.1%)
Learning how to transfer prior credits.	52 (13.0%)	60 (15.1%)	77 (19.2%)	97 (24.3%)	85 (21.3%)	28 (7.1%)
Securing transportation to and from campus.	10 (2.5%)	13 (3.3%)	30 (7.5%)	137 (34.3%)	182 (45.6%)	27 (6.7%)

Educational and Educational Needs (Cont.)	Need a lot of help	Need med. amt. of help	Need a little help	Need no further help	Unimportant or N/A	Blank
Learning to better use libraries facilities.	25 (6.3%)	45 (11.3%)	94 (23.4%)	132 (33.1%)	74 (18.4%)	30 (7.5%)
Obtaining child care services.	13 (3.3%)	3 (0.8%)	30 (7.5%)	75 (18.8%)	251 (62.8%)	27 (6.7%)
Obtaining services for a physical handicap.	2 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	12 (2.9%)	60 (15.1%)	294 (73.6%)	32 (7.9%)
Learning how to get around campus.	2 (0.4%)	5 (1.3%)	24 (5.9%)	92 (25.5%)	233 (58.2%)	35 (8.8%)
Arranging a no-conflict class schedule.	47 (11.7%)	48 (12.1%)	62 (15.5%)	92 (23.0%)	114 (28.5%)	37 (9.2%)
Obtaining access to college offices.	62 (15.5%)	52 (13.0%)	57 (14.2%)	90 (22.6%)	106 (26.4%)	34 (8.4%)
Learning how to get nontraditional credit.	72 (18.0)	72 (18.0%)	65 (16.3%)	67 (16.7%)	87 (21.8%)	37 (9.2%)
Learning about non-credit courses.	35 (8.8%)	30 (7.5%)	72 (18.0%)	109 (27.2%)	114 (28.5%)	40 (10.0%)
Association with others' Cluster						
Learning how to work with academic advisors.	27 (6.7%)	42 (10.5%)	97 (24.3%)	122 (30.5%)	77 (19.2%)	35 (8.8%)
Learning how to communicate with instructors.	18 (4.6%)	35 (8.8%)	107 (26.8%)	134 (33.5%)	74 (18.4%)	32 (7.9%)
Learning how to relate with younger students.	8 (2.1%)	17 (4.2%)	58 (14.6%)	159 (39.7%)	122 (30.5%)	35 (8.8%)
Getting along with the people I work with.	13 (3.3%)	27 (6.7%)	54 (13.4%)	164 (41.0%)	109 (27.2%)	34 (8.4%)
Understanding and expressing personal values.	10 (2.5%)	38 (9.6%)	69 (17.2%)	162 (40.6%)	87 (21.8%)	34 (8.4%)
Learning how to make more or closer friends.	17 (4.2%)	22 (5.4%)	75 (18.8%)	161 (40.2%)	92 (23.0%)	34 (8.4%)

Educational and Educational Needs (Cont.)

	Need a lot of help	Need med. amt. of help	Need a little help	Need no further help	Unimportant or N/A	Blank
Learning how to improve personal appearance.	8 (2.1%)	22 (5.4%)	48 (12.1%)	182 (45.6%)	102 (25.5%)	37 (9.2%)
Getting my family interested in my education.	8 (2.1%)	20 (5.0%)	45 (11.3%)	178 (44.4%)	114 (28.5%)	35 (8.8%)
Coping with the problems of a single parent.	5 (1.3%)	8 (2.1%)	12 (2.9%)	34 (8.4%)	308 (77.0%)	34 (8.4%)
Dealing with the problems of divorce.	5 (1.3%)	3 (0.8%)	12 (2.9%)	47 (11.7%)	294 (73.6%)	38 (9.6%)
Raising children in todays complex society.	27 (6.7%)	20 (5.0%)	34 (8.4%)	72 (18.0%)	216 (54.0%)	32 (7.9%)
Gaining a better understanding of people of difference races and cultural background.	12 (2.9%)	8 (2.1%)	58 (14.6%)	161 (40.2%)	129 (32.2%)	32 (7.9%)
Dealing with people who think differently.	18 (4.6%)	13 (3.3%)	67 (16.7%)	166 (41.4%)	104 (25.9%)	32 (7.9%)
Dealing how to deal effectively with community problems.	13 (3.3%)	0 (5.0%)	77 (19.2%)	149 (37.2%)	110 (27.6%)	30 (7.5%)
Learning how to participate in government.	17 (4.2%)	24 (5.9%)	77 (19.2%)	114 (28.5%)	134 (33.5%)	35 (8.8%)
Dealing objectively with discrimination.	17 (4.2%)	17 (4.2%)	62 (15.5%)	162 (40.6%)	109 (27.2%)	34 (8.4%)
Coping with marital stress and problems.	17 (4.2%)	27 (6.7%)	47 (11.7%)	104 (25.9%)	174 (43.5%)	32 (7.9%)
Dealing with conflicts of job/family/education.	44 (10.9%)	54 (13.4%)	60 (15.1%)	116 (28.9%)	94 (23.4%)	34 (8.4%)